

**Wrong idea of time**  
A coal mine in Jasper Park? .... p. 6

**Creativity does not age**  
Artist Lini Grol at 83 ..... p. 11

**Dragged into the Kingdom**  
Are we free moral agents? .... p. 12

# CHRISTIAN COURIER

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No. 2520

## Christian Reformed grandmother campaigns to oust judge

**James Kwantes**

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — Gertie Pool's justice campaign started with a simple December letter to the editor in a local newspaper. But it has mushroomed into a cross-Canada fight aimed at changing the Criminal Code and unseating a judge.

Pool, an Abbotsford care-home worker and freelance journalist, ignited the campaign after reading about the sentence given a man convicted of a violent sexual assault. B.C. Provincial Court Justice Harry Boyle gave Darren Adam Ursel, 26, a conditional sentence of two years less a day and three years probation — but no jail time — for the brutal rape and confinement of a woman in Abbotsford.

In explaining his sentencing decision, the judge said Ursel showed some "tenderness" to the victim and was later remorseful for the attack. Boyle

also said Ursel was at times "soft" and "gentle" with the victim, who managed to finally escape her attacker by jumping out of his moving vehicle. Boyle cited Section 742 of the Criminal Code, which gives judges the option of allowing offenders to serve their time in the community.

### Sickened

Pool says she was so sickened when she read about the case that she cried and had trouble sleeping: "You get this inner feeling, you get so dreadfully upset." The next day, Pool talked to Anneke Kampen and other employees at her workplace, Ebenezer Home, and decided to take action.

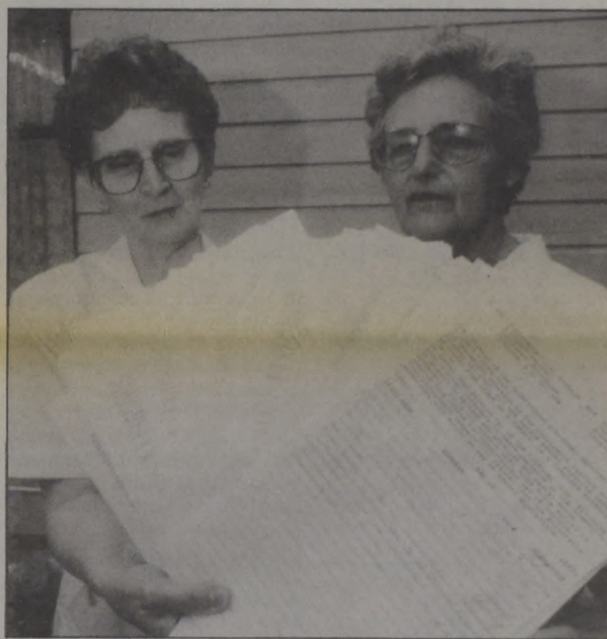
Since then, the feisty grandmother of 12 has spent much of her spare time dealing with the deluge of calls and faxes she has received. Pool's fight for justice seems to have

touched a nerve and she has appeared in both local newspapers, a Vancouver daily newspaper, and has been interviewed by CBC and local radio stations.

Abbotsford MLA John van Dongen has raised the issue in the B.C. Legislature and Abbotsford-Langley MP Randy White has spoken in the House of Commons on the case. Petitions calling for Boyle's removal and a change to Section 742 of the Criminal Code are circulating in more than 50 area churches, as well as 15 Christian Reformed Churches in Alberta. Pool has gotten inquiries from across Canada about her campaign.

Local businesses have donated time and resources and Pool has had offers of legal help if she needs it. More than 5,000 people have signed the petitions so far. Pool says she would be happy with 10,000, but 60,000

See B.C. page 2...



COURTESY JAMES KWANTES

Anneke Kampen (left) with Gertie Pool

## Campus-based ministry builds bridges between Canadians, international students



Canadians and international students gather for a potluck and Bible study at the home of Rebecca Koop (back row, second from left).

**Alan Doerksen**

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Each year, about 65,000 international students attend Canada's colleges and universities. The staff of International Student Ministry (ISM) sees those students as a mission field. ISM works at campuses across Canada to offer friendship and share the gospel with them.

ISM is a division of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada (IVCF). IVCF started focusing on long-term work with international students in the early 1950s. Its forms of outreach included Bible studies, parties, ski trips, and the first

"International Christmas," which was held in 1953 in Niagara Falls, Ont. Today, ISM staff members work at campuses across Canada where there are nearly 25,000 international students. According to IVCF's national office, ISM staff members are significantly in touch with about 1,000 of these students.

Ian Elliot, national ISM co-ordinator, made these observations on ISM's work in a recent report: "True friendships are foundations for the success of our ministries throughout Canada. Hospitality is extremely important. International students need to participate in our family life."

See MINISTRY page 2...

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## News

# B.C. woman's campaign draws much support

... continued from page 1  
would "make her day."

Is she a little overwhelmed by the public response?

"I can't figure out how this went so big so quick," says Pool, who attends Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford. She says her faith played a role in deciding to campaign for justice: "As Christians, we have to fight for our neighbors and victims."

"If this is to be a success, the Lord will look after it," she says. "Christians must get more active instead of sitting in our easy chairs and worrying about things."

Pool's campaign has sparked criticism from Emily Reid, the president of the B.C. branch of the Canadian Bar Association. In a letter to local newspapers, Reid stated she was "distressed" with the campaign aiming to oust Judge Boyle from the bench.

## 'We've got dictionaries'

"In Canada, our justice system is based on a process that has evolved over hundreds of years — not mob action," Reid wrote. "Our justice system includes a very important principle that our judges must be independent, so that they may

act without fear or favor."

But Pool says the letter has boosted support for her campaign among people who feel lawyers and the justice system are completely out of touch with ordinary citizens. Criticism from the legal community has not intimidated Pool. She told a local newspaper: "We can handle (lawyers) too. We've got dictionaries."

Pool notes that in the health care field in which she works, doctors and nurses that are negligent in performing their duties are held responsible and terminated if necessary. She believes judges should also be

held accountable for their actions: "There should be standards, and this Judge Boyle, he should be booted out so quick."

## What's right is right

The petition calls for amending Section 742 of the Criminal Code to exempt physical and sexual attackers from being able to serve their sentences in the community. Pool is not against allowing non-violent offenders to serve their time in the community. But she says more jails should be built, if necessary, to ensure violent offenders do jail time for their crimes.

"The government should look

at building some jails, not castles on islands, and isolating them," says Pool, who credits her father, a politician in the Netherlands, with instilling strong principles in her.

"What's right is right and what's wrong is wrong," she says.

Those wanting more information on the campaign can fax Pool at (604) 850-1341; e-mail her at bubble@uniserve.com; or telephone Anneke Kampen at (604) 859-1503.

# Ministry focuses on relationship-building

... continued from page 1

Reaching students with the Christian message is one of the key aims of ISM. "The most effective places where people are consistently becoming Christians ... are in Bible studies and camp programs," explains Elliot. "Conversions seem to correspond to the number of 'harvesting events' where public proclamation occurs at camps, at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter banquets..., and summer activities which provide the context and continuity for ministry."

## Building relations

One of the more recently formed ISM groups is at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. Rebecca Koop helped start

the group in September 1995, and is now working as a part-time ISM staff member at Brock. Along with a core group of volunteers, Koop organizes events that help Canadians meet and build friendships with students from foreign countries.

Relationship-building is a key part of ISM work, says Koop. This happens through events such as potluck and Bible study get-togethers which take place every two weeks, either at Koop's home or the homes of Canadian volunteers. The potlucks usually attract about 15 people and give the Canadian hosts and international students a chance to get to know each other, to enjoy food from different cultures and study the Bible together.

Most ISM events at Brock are small-scale outings, like a trip to a farm to see how maple syrup is made in early spring, or attending a dramatic performance of the Gospel of Luke at the university.

Sometimes, Koop organizes larger-scale events, such as Christmas or Thanksgiving banquets. Local churches have helped out by offering locations for these.

Christians from local churches also help by becoming host families for international students. This is done in connection with Brock's international hosting program, in which Canadian families offer room and board in their homes for a set price and set period of time.

Brock's international student office also organizes a conversa-

tion partners program, in which a Canadian volunteer is matched up with an international student to help him or her improve his or her English. ISM has made a connection with this program and encourages students to become involved with it.

## Hindered by fear

According to Koop, not many Canadians make the effort to get to know international students. "For most Canadians, it's an unnatural thing. There's a fear there," she observes. Some Canadians are hesitant about getting to know internationals because of language and cultural barriers. But if there is a forum for the two groups to meet, such as ISM, it helps break down the barriers, Koop says.

Most of the students who come to ISM events are open to hearing about the gospel, Koop continues. But when discussing faith issues, "some are more timid." Other students are not so interested in Christianity but "enjoy the atmosphere and the people." Most of the students who attend ISM events are Asian, especially Japanese and Korean, says Koop.

International Christmas is one of the key events of ISM groups across Canada. Christmas is often a time when international students are alone, with little to do between university terms if they can't afford airfare back to their home countries. As a major Christian and Canadian holiday it is a natural opportunity for Christians to show their friendship to internationals through

events such as Christmas camps.

Koop attended a recent Christmas Camp for all of Ontario, held at IVCF's Ontario Pioneer Camp. "I found it a really good experience..., an intense time together with people," she says. About 110 people, including students, staff and volunteers, attended the five-day camp. It featured many outdoor activities such as skiing and skating, a Christmas Day service and discussion times focused on Christianity.

Koop sees the main goals of ISM as being: "to communicate the gospel message to students in a way that meets their needs; visiting and spending time with them; to model Jesus; to reach out to people that are sometimes lonely."

What she finds most rewarding is "definitely the friendship with people. It's certainly not a one-way thing of me helping others."

## Potluck with atheists, Hindus, Muslims

Reg Pope has been a full-time ISM worker at the University of Saskatchewan (at Saskatoon) for eight years. The main ISM program there is the International Friendship Program, which matches international students with single Christians or families. The hosts and students get together regularly and also meet as a large group for monthly events such as a fall potluck dinner and a spring picnic. At this point, 160 families and 185 students are involved.

Pope also directs the Interna-

tional Christian Fellowship, a group of about 15 international students who meet each week with him for Bible studies; they also hold monthly potluck dinners.

Instead of a Christmas camp, the Saskatoon group celebrates "Christmas in the City" — a series of three or four events such as a winter sports day, caroling and a Christmas Eve dinner.

## Many Asians interested

Pope estimates 85 per cent of internationals who come to ISM meetings are non-Christian. "We have a very high number of Asians," he says. About half of students involved with ISM are from mainland China (and are mostly atheists); the next largest group is from India (being mostly from a Hindu or Muslim background).

Pope finds that most international students he meets are open to Christianity. "We see three to five students a year become Christians." Because many of them come from a background of atheism or another religion, "it's a big step for them to believe in God," he says.

Pope says ISM offers: "hospitality, friendship, evangelism and discipleship." For him, "the friendship with the students is very rewarding. I'm enthused when I find a student who's interested in the gospel."

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## Politics/News



David T. Koyzis

## Internet information needs tempering with insight

Several years ago I was touting the virtues of shortwave radio. Indeed, as communism was in the process of collapsing in the former Eastern Europe and Soviet Union, I would listen nearly nightly to the likes of the BBC (still my personal favorite), Radio Nederland, Deutsche Welle and Radio Moscow. How better to keep up with a changing world?

How indeed! Now there is the Internet, which enables us to retrieve information from the remotest parts of the earth on a personal computer. Nor are we constrained by the intermittent schedules of distant shortwave broadcasters. We no longer have to wait until 0100 or 0200 UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time) to hear the news from Germany or the Czech Republic. Even CBC's "The World at Six" is available via "real audio" over the Internet. What will be the impact of the Internet?

It will likely break the stranglehold of the domestic media, or even the international wire services, over the dissemination of information. Until fairly recently, if Canadians wanted to learn what was happening in the world, they had to go to the likes of *The Globe and Mail*, *Maclean's*, the nearest major newspaper, or (more likely) Canadian and American network television news.

Of course, when "The National" hits the airwaves each night we are not simply "watching the news." We are viewing a carefully packaged program reflecting the producers' judgments concerning what is and is not newsworthy. Footage is carefully chosen to complement the reports, and all items are kept fairly brief so as not to exceed an average audience's limited attention span. Yet on any given day, there are countless events, both here and abroad, that are ignored by the producers of news programs.

### Discernment must mix with excitement

Enter the Internet. With the use of "search engines" such as InfoSeek, WebCrawler and Yahoo, it is possible to find out about a debate in Iceland's parliament, a state election in Australia, a change of government in Latvia, or a new crackdown on dissidents in East Timor. Two of my favorite Internet locations are "http://www.omri.cz" and "http://www.cyna.org.cy." The former belongs to the Open Media Research Institute in Prague, which tracks political developments in post-Soviet Europe and Asia. The latter belongs to the Cyprus News Agency, which carries news of my father's homeland.

Yet with every new advance in information technology comes inevitable problems, many of which are similar to those engendered by the free market. Prior to the enactment of laws regulating economic activity, the watchword used to be *caveat emptor*: "Let the buyer beware." A similar caveat might well be issued to the Internet user, who is bombarded with a huge amount of information of varying quality. I have warned my students that the Internet is a vast reservoir of hearsay, which may be something of an exaggeration, but nevertheless alerts them to the fact that anyone can put virtually anything on the Internet, whether true or false, edifying or unedifying, benign or dangerous.

In this respect, the Internet user is obliged to approach this new medium as she would the more familiar media of communications. Much as we need to watch "The National," listen to "As It Happens" and read *The Toronto Star* with discernment, so ought we to bring our God-given capacity for judgment to the Internet.

David Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. (http://www.redeemer.on.ca). His e-mail address is: dkoyzis@redeemer.on.ca.

## Canadian launches multicultural magazine from New York

NEW YORK (Canadian Scene) — In her youth, Carolyn Quan, a second generation Canadian from Toronto, was undecided as to whether she wanted to work on aid projects in the Third World or train as a graphic designer. She chose the latter. Now at 32 and head of a successful graphic design business in New York City, she has launched *Urban Mo-Za-Ik*.

The glossy quarterly magazine is an English-language publication which addresses serious issues affecting members of a multicultural society, as well as praising its diversity.

Subtitled *Life in a Modern Multicultural Society*, Quan describes the magazine as "a celebration of people as unique individuals and the spirit of being human." It will stress the importance of seeing "people as people, regardless of their race or the color of their skin," and will emphasize that "there are more human similarities than

differences."

The first issue contains articles and features ranging from the discussion of serious social issues to lighthearted pieces. There are recipes and reviews of cinema, music and books. While the content is mainly Canadian, Quan hopes that the magazine will have an appeal throughout North America.

### Aimed at the young

As one might expect from a professional designer, the look of *Urban Mo-Za-Ik* is striking and brilliant, likely to attract younger readers "whose consensus on multiculturalism will be

so important to the future ability of Canadians to live in harmony."

Quan says she had begun to wonder if race relations in our cities will ever improve, and then adds, "I thought it was time to do something before it was too late. It was time to take ignorance and apathy and turn them into knowledge and understanding."

The magazine is available in Canada for \$4.50 per issue at retail outlets such as Shopper's Drug Mart, Canadian Tire, United Cigar Stores and Wal-Mart.

### Smile for the week

**Q:** Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, a perfect man and a perfect woman were standing at a bus stop. When the bus came, who got on first?

**A:** The perfect woman; the other three are imaginary beings.

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## Editorial

# The cross as symbol of comfort in life and death

I was standing near the office fax machine the other day when an obituary of a man I had known as a neighbor and fellow Christian came through. I took the page from the machine and absorbed the news.

Later that day I drove home and thought about my former neighbor as memories I had of him flooded back. Some of those memories were visual, some auditory. I can still hear the sound of his rake as he used to scratch his steep driveway on a weekly basis.

As I was reflecting on this in a bit of a melancholy mood, I heard Catherine MacKinnon's thin sweet voice over the radio very appropriately singing the fifth verse of "Abide With Me":

*Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.*

I drank in the song as I reflected on the passing of my former neighbor. What a comforting song, I thought. I'm sure that the man I had known as a joyful Christian experienced God's grace before and after he closed his eyes. As the sound of the music faded, somehow his passing seemed less sad.

## A jarring change

That night I recalled the song and went to the piano to play and sing it. But as I reached the fifth verse in the Christian Reformed Church's grey *Psalter Hymnal*, I was struck by the fact that the wording seemed different. I got out the older blue hymnal and compared the verses. What in the blue hymnal was "Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes" had become "Hold now your Word before my closing eyes."

## May we never forget the tremendous outpouring of love when Christ died on the cross for us sinners.

I was not sure I liked the change. It had never struck me before, but that's probably because I haven't sung the hymn for years. Why the change? I wondered.

I phoned Dr. Emily Brink, music and liturgy editor of the Christian Reformed Church. She could not recall the exact reasoning for the changes, but she thought it had something to do with the fact that holding a cross before a dying person was considered too much like the Roman Catholic practice during the last rites of the church. It would be more Reformed to make that "Hold now your Word", which when it is capitalized can refer to Christ.

But I am not so sure that the committee did not go too far here. If Christ is the Word, who is asked to hold the Word before my closing eyes?

## We glory in the cross

This is a well-known hymn sung throughout all English-speaking countries. By changing the wording we cut ourselves off from the past, but, more importantly, also from other Christians who sing the traditional version. The hymn was written by Henry F. Lyte in 1847, who was a Protestant, not a Catholic.

If the Word here is the Bible, we also run into problems. Since the verse is about a person

dying, is it likely that such a person wants to read before he or she dies? And if "Word" does not refer to the Bible but to the promises of God, does one hold those promises before closing eyes or closing ears? The imagery gets a bit tricky here.

I would think that a visual image such as a cross is more appropriate, all the more so because the rest of the verse is visual, with light breaking forth and shadows fleeing. And since the author wrote his song that way, why not keep it the way it was?

The cross is a very comforting symbol to so many Christians. It is the place between heaven and earth where Christ showed his deepest love and where we may put down our burdens and our load of guilt. There are many other hymns that speak of the cross as a central image. "In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time"; "When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died"; "Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim."

## Proclaim his death

I like what the *Psalter Hymnal* committee did to verse four as it changed "Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness" to "Though ills have weight, and tears their bitterness," exactly the opposite. It's a matter of psychological insight. The older version is perhaps a bit too triumphalistic and a denial of the reality of suffering. You can't deny the bitterness of sickness and grief. The Psalms don't. But God strengthens us and makes us triumph in the midst of grief.

But even that I would have left the way it was. In the same verse we still sing "I fear no foe" even though many of us do, and "Where is death's sting?" even though the pain of death can be real. If death can lose its sting, cannot ills lose their weight and tears their bitterness?

But verse five bothers me more. Maybe it's because I want to be part of that worldwide church that sings about the cross. And, besides, is it right to tamper with people's memories?

Some may say it is better to focus on the resurrection than on the death of Christ on the cross. But wasn't the Lord's supper instituted "to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26)? May we never forget the tremendous outpouring of love when Christ died on the cross for us sinners.

I find it very comforting to sing: "Hold Thou thy cross before my closing eyes, / Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies." Since it is Christ holding the cross before my eyes, and not a priest, I won't make the mistake of taking my eyes off him.

Something to think about as we just passed Ash Wednesday and entered the season of Lent. **BW**

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## Letters

# It's a matter of twisted societal values

I'd like to make some comments on the column about sports salaries, and on Bill Van Dyk's response.

Rob Janssens seems to have a kind of "take what you can get" attitude about salaries, which also colors his aside comment about teachers' salaries. Bill Van Dyk seems to think that baseball players and fans are all victims of the political system.

While there are elements of truth in Mr. Van Dyk's comments, the picture is broader. The money problem in baseball and other professional sports is a matter which relates to society in general, a reflection of societal values gone wrong.

Economists talk about both "a willingness and an ability to pay" when discussing the marketplace. Athletes have huge salaries, but their fans are willing to pay high prices to see games, buy jackets, shirts, caps and what-not carrying team logos; and they buy the products advertised during televised games.

This spirit isn't confined to sports. People will pay even higher prices to see *Les Misérables* or the Rolling Stones, and they support a system that also pays actors, entertainers and rock stars exorbitant salaries. Politicians also exploit that "willingness." When they promise to build a SkyDome, they're doing that

because the body politic will stand for it. We Christians, I hope, don't share those values-gone-wrong.

## No room for three

The points Mr. Van Dyk makes would be better served if the "facts" he cites were grounded in baseball history.

The owners did not agree to take on a commissioner in order to get an antitrust exemption. They imposed a strong commissioner on themselves after the Black Sox Scandal [of 1919, when players were paid to throw the outcome of games].

The perception that in early baseball there were a number of leagues, and that numerous leagues and teams create a fairer playing field, so to speak, is also not borne out by history. There were two leagues in the 1880s: the American Association and the National League. For one year (1884), the Union Association started as an attempt at a third league, and it failed. There simply wasn't enough room for three leagues. There were too many teams for the cities available to support them (travel was difficult and almost all of the population was concentrated east of the Mississippi River).

In 1890 the players started their own league, raiding the other two. That only lasted a year. When it failed, it took the

American Association with it. The remaining National League had 12 teams. The American League was then formed out of a minor league, the Western League (still east of the Mississippi), by sports writer Ban Johnson and several financiers, including Charles Comiskey, who then became team owners.

In 1914-15 there was another attempt at a third major league, the Federal League; that lasted two years. There were too many teams chasing too few dollars and too little support.

But the spirit of greed was evident early. The American League initially attracted players by giving big salaries. However, as soon as the new competition, the Federal League, died, salaries went right back down again. Once established, the American League went back to capping salaries and using the reserve clause (a team owned rights to a player until the team didn't want him anymore).

Ed Cassidy  
Lewiston, N.Y.

## How do professional sports build the Kingdom?

We believe that everything we do must be motivated by our love of God and our love of our neighbor. We started Christian schools because we wanted our children to be trained for Christ-centred living, showing them what it means to live life in all its aspects according to the terms of the kingship of Christ, so that through their obedient lives God's Kingdom may come.

I thought about this when I read Rob Janssens' column "What's the score?" My question is: Who of the two, the teacher in a Christian school or the sports player who can hit a major league pitcher's curveball at 100 mph, can do his work best in terms of the Kingdom of Christ? Particularly when in our modern times, sport is not physical training anymore, but one of the main idols of our time, where billions of dollars are spent just to satisfy human excitement.

Meanwhile, professional sports also tramples on the law of God by abusing the Lord's Day. How many people stay home from church to watch an "important game" on TV? Is that Kingdom building?

What do these highly paid sports-people contribute to the furtherance of the Kingdom of Christ in the world? Sport is not sport anymore, but big business. The writer seems to equate success and meaningful life with making big money.

I would not have been half so disappointed if a teacher in a secular school had written it, but here is a teacher in a Christian school who seems to have difficulty sorting out his Christian discretion.

Syrt Wolters  
Victoria, B.C.

## An open letter to John Tamming Regarding your article "On shooting our wounded generals" (CC Dec. 13)

It caused me great sadness to read your article. You see, I'm the woman one of your "generals" slept with. I'm the one he used and abused and threw away like yesterday's garbage.

I went to him for advice on my failing marriage. I went to him a broken, vulnerable person, not knowing where else to go, and he took advantage of that.

I slept with your "general" often, for almost two years, while he buried your grandmother and counselled your children. But he justified it. He would pray with me every morning and ask God for forgiveness. He tried to convince me that God had forgiven us and no one else had to know about our relationship.

I spent a total of six months in psychiatric wards, trying to keep your "general's" secret. I tried to commit suicide twice. When I did break the secret to the consistory, I was told I was the one who was full of evil spirits and had the devil working in me.

### They have hurt hundreds

Two of my children will never enter a church again. Would you like to see haunted eyes? Look into the eyes of children who have just been told that their mother tried to kill herself. Would you like to see gnawed fingernails? We have moved far from our hometown where your "general" still lives. We are on welfare, and every month is a struggle to survive.

Maybe you should start caring about the women your "general" slept with. Maybe you should create a fund for all your "general's" victims. I found out that I wasn't number one or two on his list of victims. I was one of many.

In your article you say these "generals" have blessed hundreds. In their deceit and unfaithfulness they have hurt hundreds (no exaggeration) — my kids, my parents, my siblings, his family and every member of the congregation.

Doesn't it worry you that you personally know eight such pastors (and there are a lot more), and you still consider them "generals"?

I think your army is in BIG trouble.

Name withheld

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## Environment

Creation waits...



John Wood

## Time to protect a crown jewel

John R. Wood

The Star Wars space ship *Milennium Falcon* has once again

burst across the silver screen. And as her captain Han Solo retorts, "She ain't much to look at, kid, but she's got it where it counts!" Light speed, or its cinematic simulation, is what we crave.

The very fast, very big, very powerful fill our collective imaginations. Super, grand, mega or blockbuster superlatives are daily fair. But this is not limited to advertising or the movies; it influences a wide variety of our activities. We seldom take life at its own pace, as it comes to us. Rather we speed it up with insta-banking, quick checkout, drive-thru or express service.

Or conversely we slow it down, with time-release capsules, slow-motion replays or endless reruns. But this "just-so" world we create depends on natural processes to sustain it. And the pace in that world is distinctly different. Fuzzy thinking about time and our relation to the natural world will undo us if we are not careful.

It isn't always easy to appreciate the temporal scale of natural processes. Many of them occur outside of our limits of perception. They may be too fast, too slow, too large or too small to record without the help of instruments. The miracle of the modern world is our ability to capture the products of many of these natural processes. These insights are a great blessing to us from God for the relief of much human suffering.

But the scale at which we operate in the natural world has been changing, and sometimes we fail to notice it. Recent estimates, in fact, suggest that we move more earth and rock than any physical force on the planet — glacier, volcano, wind or water. But in contrast to these natural

***"It would take three worlds... to supply the material needs of the human population at a North American level of consumption."***

agents, we simplify the ecosystems that we alter. It takes decades, even centuries, for them to return to their natural complexity. And complexity, or patchiness, as ecologists call it, is an essential ingredient in a well-functioning ecosystem.

What concerns me is that with all our seeming interest in time, we lack a basic insight into ecological time-scales. The general public, and even some scientists, don't seem to realize that you cannot raise or lower natural processes as if they had a switch. We can alter systems by pushing the dirt around, planting a few trees and calling it a restoration. But we deceive ourselves if we think that a fully functional system has returned. Our mentality remains "push it back" and move on to the next good spot. We are fast running out of "good spots."

### Nature doesn't fit a business cycle

In Alberta this month a classic case of temporal misunderstanding is taking place. Hearings are underway about whether or not to dig a new open-pit coal mine on the boundary of Jasper National Park, a natural crown jewel in Canada. The pro-mine crowd says it is perfectly safe and compatible with all kinds of wildlife. There will be some dislocations, but the "restoration and enhancement program will make this a short-term problem," they say. The environmentalist crowd doesn't buy this argument and claims the large mammals, especially predators, will be lost. So how do we decide?

The decision, and hundreds of others like it, is being made with a profound misunderstanding of ecological time. Very few natural systems operate within the constraints of a business cycle. The life of this project is 20 years — fairly lengthy by most standards. Yet the altered system has taken millennia to develop to its current position. How long will it take to return? No one really knows. And here is the nub of the problem.

### A better way to scale the earth

We do not have a plan in place for resource used that is scaled at an ecosystem tempo of development. It is becoming the central dilemma of modern life. How can we sustain our way of living with its overwhelming demands on the natural world?

A recent Environment Canada report estimates that it would take three worlds, this one and two more, to supply the material needs of the human population at a North American level of consumption. Sobering, isn't it? Perhaps it is time for us to review our lives in the light of another time scale. The one that the Creator built into the universe. We would find it a much better way to scale our lives.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College in Edmonton.

## Niagara interfaith ecology group

Marian Van Til

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — A small group of Niagara area Christians has, since 1992, been valiantly trying to stoke the fires of earth stewardship under people of faith in the Niagara Peninsula. The Niagara Interfaith Network on Ecology (NINE) is trying to get more people to embrace "the concept of good stewardship, which is modelled on the Creator's own loving care for Creation," says a NINE publicity statement.

NINE states its purpose as being "to assist individuals, churches and environmental groups to work together towards stewardship, and [to] enjoy and appreciate nature — God's creation — in the process."

NINE began after an Earth Day forum held at St. Thomas Anglican Church in St. Catharines, which encouraged environmentally concerned people to work together. It now organizes regular activities, participates in community events, speaks to churches and ministerial associations and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter.

### Not exactly 'interfaith'

NINE member Bob Kirk admits that calling the group an "interfaith" network may be misleading. "When we started out we had a Buddhist come to a few meetings, and we wanted to attract all people with a spiritual basis. But now I don't think we have any member who isn't a Christian, and that's really our framework."

NINE has developed an educational presentation called "The Rainbow Journey." NINE describes the journey this way: "Based on God's covenant with Noah and all creatures after the flood, the presentation will guide participants through an imaginary journey to seven locations in Niagara, which is also a seven-stage journey of personal awareness. The colors of the rainbow symbolize the stages of the journey and help participants remember the Creator's purpose for humanity as stewards of Creation. Included ... are Scriptures, poems, music, drama and slides." The program, available free of charge, can last up to 40 minutes and may be adapted to worship services and events for any age group.

Bob Kirk says it's been a

struggle to attract new members, something the group very much wants to do. People are now more aware of the environment but they seem to think there's no longer a crisis, he says. NINE chairperson Clair Theijsmeijer seconds that. "Environmental issues have gone onto the back burner," she says. But she also concedes that NINE "hasn't been proactive enough in getting our story out to people."

Theijsmeijer was a founder of NINE. She has a BA in environmental studies from Waterloo University which she attained after her children were grown up, she says. She's a member of St. Giles Presbyterian Church in St. Catharines. (She serves as the the Niagara Presbytery [the equivalent of a classis], alerting the churches to environmental issues, providing a worship package and an "environmental audit" for churches.)

NINE invites all Niagarans "who are deeply concerned about preserving this beautiful planet to join us in the challenge and the adventure of acting as good stewards" of it.

For more information contact Claire Theijsmeijer at (905) 646-9323.



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• Save time and travel costs by using a conference call for meetings. Less travel leads to fewer car or plane emissions, and less pollution.

• Try car pooling to work to save money and pollution, not to mention cut down on excess traffic!

Taking the time to learn about the environment or any other topic of interest will increase your knowledge and expand your mind. Whether it's for personal or professional reasons, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges urges you to Learn for Life.



# ARTS & MEDIA

Star Wars: The Special Edition



## The Force vanquishes the Evil Empire — again

Marian Van Til

### Star Wars: The Special Edition

*Rated Family. Stars Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guinness. Written and directed by George Lucas.*

In a galaxy far, far away, human inhabitants are engaged in a cosmic battle of good versus evil. Good knights who embrace the all-encompassing strength of the Force can rely on that Force to empower them, to help them fight and win their battles. A good-knight-gone-wrong heads the evil legions which seek to devour the Force's forces.

Sound familiar? It should on two counts. It's an obvious twist on the cosmic spiritual battle between God and his followers and Satan and his followers; and it's the concept that underpins the plot of George Lucas's phenomenally successful 20-year-old film trilogy, *Star Wars*, just re-released for a new generation.

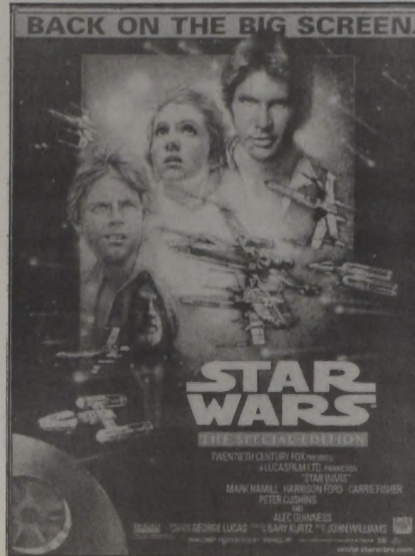
From a "spiritual" point of view, *Star Wars* reads like a kind of technology-saturated, intergalactic, secularized parallel to

biblical cosmology. In Part 1, currently showing in theatres, a small contingent of rebels who are trying to throw off the unjust yoke of the Evil Empire defeats the Empire with the help of the Force and a lone Jedi knight (a monk who serves the Force). This Elijah-like figure hands over his mantle to a young would-be knight who then carries on the older man's mission and eventually (Part 3) helps resurrect the Jedi as a spiritual force.

In Part 2 (to be released on February 17) we realize that the monk's evil counterpart had escaped. Then *The Empire Strikes Back* and Evil seemingly triumphs over Good. But Part 3 (to be released about two weeks after Part 2) consummates a new age of the Force with *The Return of the Jedi*.

#### Fairy tale re-born

Despite all the advertising hype and updated technological wizardry associated with the re-release of this trilogy, it should be clear from this description that *Star Wars* is really a modernized, dressed-up fairy tale, complete with Good and Bad presented in broad strokes, and a



moral for children-who-aspire-to-be-good to take to heart.

This re-release has changed the films only slightly. For example, only some four-and-a-half minutes of new footage has been added to Part 1, mostly in the form of computer generated non-human creatures inserted into scenes to "enhance" those scenes. The sound has been digi-

talized and upgraded, as has some of the picture quality.

People who saw the original *Star Wars* as kids (or as older "kids") will have fun looking for the added material. But beyond that, and beyond enjoying this fairy tale again on the big screen (the big screen does make a lot of difference in how one experiences these films), this re-release was a hyper-savvy means of introducing a new generation to *Star Wars*.

And consequently, an easy means of

hauling in even more truckloads of money for Lucas and friends. (The original trilogy has made \$1.3 billion, and far more than that on the marketing of accompanying products — light sabres, Darth Vader helmets, and the like.)

That brings up the interesting fact (which I had forgotten) that

*Star Wars* was the first film to have a line of products based on its characters released along with the film — now such a common practice with films aimed at children that the products often upstage the films.

In 1977 when it came out, *Star Wars* was also on the cutting edge of special-effects technology, influencing countless other film makers and subsequent films.

#### Stay home to watch?

The special effects which were mouth-dropping in 1977 now look fairly tame. Yet like any fairy tale that has become a classic — and this one has — its straightforward story telling and unembarrassed idealism are winsome, and it doesn't feel dated.

There's a kind of off-putting incongruity between this essentially simple story and the hype used to market its re-release. Unless you want to enjoy the expansiveness of the big screen, or count the ways this revised version has been revised, you may as well stoke up the popcorn popper, rent one or more of the originals and have a fun movie night at home.

## Mennonite Brethren Communications launches Family Life Network

WINNIPEG (MBC) — A local radio producer has created a network aimed at helping families in crisis. Called the Family Life Network, the new network is part of Mennonite Brethren Communications (MBC).

"The family is under tremendous pressure today," says MBC executive director Burton Buller. "Over half of marriages today are ending in divorce. We believe that the church can offer hope and help through our new Family Life Network."

The Network will use TV, videos, books and other resources, workshops and seminars, the Internet and radio to communicate with people seeking assistance with family-related issues. "Through the Family Life Network, we want to help people to build healthy families using Christian principles," says Buller.

MBC is launching the new network as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations.

Today, the agency offers radio programs in six languages reaching five to eight million people a week. Its programs are heard across the former Soviet Union and parts of Europe and throughout South and Central America.

According to Buller, "One of

the greatest needs is help for families — both those who attend church and those who don't. There is tremendous pressure on North American families today. Some statistics suggest that around 60 per cent of marriages in Canada and the U.S. end in divorce. We believe we

should offer something to people who are looking for help."

At present, MBC has a limited radio presence in Canada. The agency's English-language program, *Connecting Points*, can be heard on the Golden West network in southern Manitoba and

parts of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and on one station in Vancouver.

For more information about the Family Life Network contact Burton Buller by calling (204) 667-9576 or by e-mail to [bbuller@mbcom.com](mailto:bbuller@mbcom.com).

### Program uses Internet to help marriages

SOUTH PORTLAND, Maine (PPI) — Can marriages and other couple relationships benefit from the Internet? Dr. David Sanford, Maine couples therapist and newspaper columnist, thinks so. Recently he opened Couples Place, an interactive Web site at <http://www.couples-place.com>.

Couples Place is designed to serve what Sanford calls a large and neglected population: the many committed couples, married and not yet married, whose

relationships are floundering and who need useful information, skills and encouragement — not therapy. It is not geared specifically to Christians, but Sanford believes it can be beneficial to people from a variety of religious backgrounds.

Couples Place offers a subscription program based on a model of co-operative learning that is uniquely suited to the Internet: people help each other online by sharing their knowledge and experience, anony-

mously if they want, under the guidance of an experienced couples therapist and educator who functions as discussion leader.

#### A blending of elements

The subscription program, which costs \$78 (US) a year, includes "The Couples Adventure," a bi-weekly newsletter, a manual for couples on the art of good conversation, a "workout room" of relationship activities and exercises, and a number of

moderated discussion forums. For people who choose not to subscribe, the site offers a variety of free features.

Sanford calls Couples Place "an experiment ... to see if elements of a self-help group, a college seminar, a neighborhood bulletin board and a quality newsletter, mixed with humor and creative exercises, can provide the skills and community support that many people who want to succeed at their relationships need and don't have."



## Church

## Former abortionist writes 'about your choice' for others in the abortion industry

ST. PAUL, Minn. (EP) — Former abortionist Joan Appleton, who directed the Planned Parenthood clinic in Falls Church, Virginia, for five years, has just completed a brochure for employees of abortion clinics called "About Your Choice."

The brochure asks readers to consider the facts, says Appleton. "In 1973, abortion was seen as 'The Great Panacea' — there would be no more unwanted children, no more child abuse, no more spouse abuse. But statistics show these have

increased dramatically. Even suicide among teenagers has risen dramatically. A society that kills its children cannot survive."

The brochure doesn't use a condemning approach, says Appleton, who left the abortion industry years ago when she realized the effect abortion had on the lives of young mothers. She knows first-hand the agony of facing the guilt of abortion. She also knows the loneliness. When she resigned from the Falls Church clinic and walked away from the abortion industry

she found that all her former friends and allies had deserted her. "I knew that some of them — maybe most of them — would leave. I didn't know that every friend I had would abandon me."

Appleton, who speaks to pro-life groups across the U.S., notes that one of the things that makes it difficult to leave the abortion industry is giving up the recognition and acclaim that it offers. "People admire you for what you do," she says. "They say, 'Oh, that takes so much courage.' But the fact of the

matter is, most of our friends would never do the dirty work of abortion."

### 'Friends' will fall away

Appleton continues, "When it becomes unpopular to do abortions, the politicians aren't going to be there, the feminists aren't going to be there, the administrators aren't going to be there. They are going to be distancing themselves from the guilt. But it's not going to be easy for those of us who have participated — and unless

you've been there, you cannot imagine the pain."

The Society of Centurions in the province of New Brunswick offers help for people leaving the abortion industry, but no U.S. equivalent has yet been founded, says Appleton. "The church needs to be a place of healing and reconciliation," she notes. Her new brochure is one step in the establishment of an outreach for former abortionists.

## International Bible Society releases NIV-made-easy

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (EP) — International Bible Society, publishers of the world's best-selling New International Version of the Bible, has now released a New International Reader's Version. Designed to provide young and new-English readers with a Bible that is easy to read and understand, the new Bible is the result of four years of development and production.

"The potential for this new version is immense," says Dr. Eugene Rubingh, vice-president of translations, "especially in the non-Western world."

Rubingh managed a team of nearly 40 Bible scholars and literacy experts to create the

new "reader's version." Working from Greek and Hebrew sources, as well as text of the NIV, translators revised the text thought-for-thought — instead of word-for-word — resulting in shorter sentences and simpler grammar. Ironically, the "reader's version" is longer than the regular NIV.

### Challenge to maintain meaning

One of the biggest challenges of the project was maintaining and conveying the authoritative meaning of the text without using terms that would not be understood by young readers, said Dr. Jean Rodwick, who directed the project.

Rodwick offers Ecclesiastes 9:11 as an example of how the new reader's version simplifies reading level while retaining meaning. The original NIV text reads: "I have seen something else under the sun. The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them

all."

In the new reader's version, the same passage reads: "Here's something else I have seen on this earth. Races aren't always won by those who run fast. Battles aren't always won by those who are strong. Wise people don't always have plenty of food. Clever people aren't always wealthy. Those who have learned a lot aren't always

favoured. God controls the timing of every event. He controls how things turn out."

While using simpler language and grammar, the new reader's NIV retains the flavor and rhythmic phrasing of the NIV itself. Rubingh explained that this should help readers make a smoother transition to reading a more advanced version of the Bible.

## CRWRC sends volunteers to Cuba

BURLINGTON, Ont. (CRWRC) — Jim and Hilda Visser of Vanastra, Ont., (near Clinton) departed February 10 for a one-month term helping hurricane victims in Cuba with the Reformed Church of Cuba.

Overseas experience isn't new

to the Vissers, who served three years in Mexico with the National Presbyterian Church as administrators with a Christian camp there. Upon returning to Canada in 1989, Jim Visser pastored a church in Vanastra, Ont. The Vissers have spent the past seven years with Christian Reformed World Missions as church planters in Costa Rica, where they hosted several work teams from North America.

In Cuba the Vissers are helping local churches assess damage and needs among community members. They are

providing training in community development so that the churches can gain skills in working together to respond to this disaster but also find ways of preparing for disasters in the future. The Vissers will also arrange for the arrival of a North American work team to help the Cuban churches rebuild. Volunteers will be recruited from Spanish-speaking Reformed churches in Canada and from the Northern Alberta Christian Reformed churches, who maintain a special relationship with the churches in Cuba.



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## Church

## Chapter &amp; Verse



Wayne Brouwer  
★ Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
Laura Smit  
Al Wolters

## Tell yourself to praise the Lord

The first and the last line of Psalm 103 say: "Praise the Lord, O my soul." That's an encouragement for you and me to do the same thing: tell yourself, your soul, your inner being, to stop fretting and fussing and to praise the Lord.

The self-exhortation of Psalm 103 frames a hymn to God's love and compassion for his people. The poem is chock-full of reasons for praise.

"Forget not all his benefits": he forgives your sins, heals your diseases, redeems your life from the pit, crowns you with love and compassion, satisfies your desires, renews your strength....

Praise him for personal blessings when you are refreshed by his kindness. Sing of God's grace, O my soul. The psalm describes the vastness of God's grace (vv. 6-12) in numerous word pictures: God's grace is as great as the heavens are high; he has removed sin as far as sun-up is from sunset; and God's compassion is as tender as a father's for his erring children.

## Doesn't expect superhuman feats

Moreover, God remembers that we are dust. We were made from the soil and to the earth we return. God keeps in mind that we are only human. We cannot be and need not be superhuman. You and I who have, or had, little children had plenty of reasons to get angry with them because they can do such dumb things. But we kept in mind that a child is only a child. And so God remembers "that we are dust" and that we cannot live without his compassion.

Not only are we sinners in need of God's grace, a human being is also weak and fragile. "His days are like grass." If we have any beauty and excellence, it is short-lived, "like a flower of the field." A person's life is soon gone and forgotten.

I think we should talk about this fact with our neighbors. It is easier to have them agree with us that we are human and mortal than that we are sinners and guilty. They agree that this is a grass- and flower-like existence. "The wind blows over it and it is gone and its place remembers it no more." All human beings know that this is our lot. And that raises the question about the meaning of life.

## Fragility overarched by faithfulness

When you say that life is short, most people start the next sentence with "Therefore...." Life does not last, *therefore* smell the roses. Life is breakable and will soon be over, *therefore* see the Bahamas, or eat more peanut butter.

Our teacher does not say "therefore." He says: "BUT from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him and his righteousness with their children's children."

Our fragile lives are overarched by the deep blue sky of God's lovingkindness and covenant faithfulness. We live our short lives underneath that arch. It's the railroad bridge spanning from one shore to the other, built on two pylons, "from everlasting to everlasting." Which is the exact opposite of grass and flowers. And this alone gives meaning to our lives and those of our children and their children.

Praise the Lord, you angels and stars and churches. And you, my soul, praise the LORD!

Andrew Kuyvenhoven, a retired Christian Reformed pastor, now does his self-exhortation in Grand Rapids, Mich.

## Roman Catholic bishops ask for full membership in Canadian Council of Churches

OTTAWA (CCCB) — The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has made a formal application to the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) to become a full member of that organization. The request came in January as Christian churches across Canada marked the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and as the council's future may be uncertain (see accompanying story). The Catholic Church is currently an associate member of CCC.

In his letter to CCC president Dr. Alexandra Johnston of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Archbishop Spence said, "Collaboration and communal sharing over the years will continue to nourish our ecumenical witness and common hope through biblical and theological dialogue, pastoral programs, justice work in common, inter-church coalitions and other diverse conversations and engagements with our society and culture."

Archbishop Spence prays that "the Spirit will lead us all together in ever greater witness to that unity for which Christ

prayed so that the world may believe."

## Changes in CCC

Over the past few years the CCC has been undergoing a number of structural changes and recently the CCC governing board adopted an understanding of how the council will function as a forum. Archbishop Spence said in the letter "the common commitment to this understanding is integral to the council's ability to foster reform and renewal, to respond to new challenges and to adapt to the diversity and changing needs of its members."

One of the changes includes an intention of the council to function in both English and

French as much as possible. More than half of all Roman Catholics in Canada are French speaking.

The CCCB's ecumenical director, Sr. Donna Geernaert, SC, says, "membership in the CCC is important because it signals the commitment of the Roman Catholic Church to ecumenism." Geernaert added that "this witness to our search for unity is a significant sign in today's divided world."

The CCCB represents Canada's 131 Roman Catholic bishops who have the pastoral charge of more than 12 million Canadians. The CCC is comprised of 19 member churches in Canada, including the Christian Reformed Church.

## Canadian Council of Churches may face shaky future

## Marian Van Til

TORONTO — The Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), an ecumenical group of mostly mainline churches, is facing a financial crisis which could cause the council's disintegration, says *The Mennonite Reporter*.

The crisis has come about because the United Church is itself facing a financial crunch and has consequently reduced its

support of the CCC by \$64,000 this year. As a result, CCC has had to reduce staff and make structural changes.

CCC interim general secretary Bob Mills says financial reserves are depleted and the council could dissolve by sometime next year. "We have no other sources of income except member churches," Mills told *The Mennonite Reporter*.

## South Carolina churches 'adopt' welfare recipients

## Governor's surplus campaign funds pay for it

GREENVILLE, S.C. (EP) — South Carolina churches are "adopting" welfare recipients and helping them move from dependency to independence in an innovative program called "Putting Families First."

Gov. David Beasley is funding the program through a foundation he established with a \$200,000 surplus from his campaign fund. Director Lisa Van Riper says she hopes to recruit 500 churches within the next two years.

Rev. Rod Mays of Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church says the program offers a personal touch that other approaches often lack. "Here we are actually developing relationships with people — caring, compassionate relationships," says Mays. "This is like Christ taught."

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Feature

# Undisturbed she hammers away at her stories

In celebration of a remarkable  
woman and her work



Bert Witvoet

BRAMPTON, Ont. — Lini Richarda Grol, a vivacious senior citizen in Holland Christian Homes, has never been able to cap her spring of creativity. In September 1995, at age 81, she started a literary club in the home. Its members meet every Thursday from 10 a.m. till noon to read poems or short stories and to talk about writers and their writing, either in Dutch or in English. Last year Lini wrote a one-act play called *Peppermint Troubles*, which has appeared in the anthology *KAIROS 1996*, published by Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ont., and will be performed there.

The imagination well within her started bubbling early in life. Born the fourth child of a Roman Catholic family of seven in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, she began writing poetry and stories at age nine or 10, much to the hilarity of her older brother and sister, she recalls. Lini tried to hide behind the pen name Anna Maria Catharina van Romanov tot Romanov, but her siblings saw right through that little scheme and henceforth referred to her as "the Freule" (the duchess).

She grew up in a home where her parents told their children folktales and other stories from their youth, "and we had a tradition of singing and praying together as part of our daily lives," writes Lini.

## A wide range of experiences

Lini, who became a registered nurse before the Second World War, experienced the bombing of Rotterdam on May 14, 1940, but survived unharmed, though 14 other nurses were killed that day. After that she worked in several hospitals and sanatoria in Holland and even completed a three-year stint as a nurse in South Africa.

The most distressing and

demanding job of her life was offering pre- and post-suicide care to failed-suicide patients and their families. The same sense of compassion that drove her to do such work and other volunteer tasks made her encounter with people's pain difficult.

In the meantime she continued to write stories and

poems, often drawing from her experience as a nurse. Several of her works were published in Dutch periodicals.

In 1954, Lini and another Dutch nurse who also worked in a hospital in Pretoria, South Africa, decided to emigrate to Canada, because they did not trust the political situation in South Africa. In Canada Lini

practised her nursing skills in Toronto, Brantford and finally Welland. During her summer holidays she took writing courses at McMaster University in Hamilton and at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute (now University) in Toronto.

## She notices more than most

In 1970 Lini moved to Fonthill, Ont., to open a studio where she could sell her work. Over the years she used more than one medium. Who does not recall the delicate scissor cuttings by Grol? In addition to that she painted, formed mosaics and sculpted small pieces.

From her work one can tell that Lini Grol likes to focus on nature, children, suffering and happiness, God and all those things and events that pass by those who are in a hurry and do not care for the still small voice of truth and love.

Lini also likes to speak up for the underdog and the fools.

Take her poem "My neighbor's dreams," which empathizes with the man next door who's building a huge boat that people think he will never finish. He's a kind of second Noah.

*Undisturbed he hammers away,  
always alone.*

*The passers-by yawn and say,  
bored,  
"He'll never leave the shore."  
But he, while his hands are  
working away  
sends his mind ahead of him,  
reaching farther and farther  
shores,  
to return each night  
with bigger dreams.*

Lini, too, sent her mind ahead of her as she wrote and cut and painted. But she did reach other shores, as she was invited to exhibit her scissor art at Ottawa's Carlton University library, for example.

## She feels at home

On Feb. 23, 1995, Lini moved to Holland Christian Homes. That seems a little odd, given that she is Roman Catholic and many of the inhabitants of HCH are Reformed. Of course, she has the Dutch ethnic background in common with them. But what of the faith?

Lini has never been much interested in staring at the gap that runs between Christians of various denominational loyalties. She is an ecumenical Christian, who simply believes that we all serve the same Lord.

"I feel totally accepted," she wrote me in a letter regarding Holland Christian Homes. "I take part in many of the events."

Part of that acceptance came from the fact that several readers of *Christian Courier* were familiar with Lini's writings and scissor cuttings. Lini is a bit of a celebrity at the home.

## The gift of laughter

Another part of the acceptance comes undoubtedly from the fact that Lini accepts others. And she has a good sense of humor.

"Laughter, she writes in a news release about the literary club in HCH, "is one of the great gifts of God to all of us. Only humans can laugh. God knew all along that we needed laughter in our lives. Only lately scientists have found out that laughter is beneficial to our health, that it has a healing quality to our suffering bodies and souls."

Does God laugh? Lini asks in one of her poems. The answer is:

*Yes.  
For there is a smile in the sky  
when a rainbow stretches  
to measure the unmeasurable,  
and  
there is a chuckle in the air  
when a rivulet runs downhill  
joining a river, claiming noisily  
brotherhood  
and yes  
there is a gentle laugh  
when joy flashes between  
parents and child  
playing hide and seek  
and finding each other.*

"One has to wonder at their wisdom," writes Lini in the same news release, "when it took scientists this long to find out that laughter is good for old and young. My late father, bless his soul, knew that long ago. He loved to laugh and was 98 years young when he died."

Lini never married, but that never stopped her from writing about mothers and families and children. Her scissor art also expresses the joys of parenthood.

Lini describes her personal mission statement as follows: "I sincerely hope that my writing shows my belief in God, and, what is more, his influence on my life and writing. God gives me strength and inspiration, and I pray daily that I come up to his generosity to me, and use my talent AMDG [Ad Majoram Dei Gloriam — Latin for 'to the greater glory of God']."

# Her wedding dress



*Today  
I recalled  
with how much youthful pride  
and joyful tenderness  
that glorious day  
she tried on her home-made  
snow-white wedding dress.  
And later  
how she hung it so trustingly  
beside her husband's  
one and only  
three piece-suit.*

*And yes,  
I recall that other day  
when with smiling eyes  
she bravely searched for  
the right dyes to make  
her precious dress  
ready for a more every-day  
use, and how softly*

*she marveled and mused:  
Shall I take this cheerful,  
heavenly light blue  
or that darker and more  
practical hue?  
And how as years  
of tears and laughter  
between the two of them  
went by,  
her simple light blue dress  
became a royal blue...  
with traces of black.*

*Today when we met,  
at his very last rest,  
she wore that same old dress  
now time-dyed deep black...  
but still with her inborn pride,  
and ennobled gentleness....*



## Like lice, Lini's works jump around

Bert Witvoet

Although no one, least of all Lini Grol, would claim that she is a major writer (seven of her 12 books are self-published under Trillium Books), Grol does have a remarkable output of works and has from time to time been recognized and awarded for her writings and artwork.

A life member of the American Association of Women Writers and of the Canadian Authors Association, as well as a long-time member of the Canadian Poetry Association, Grol has a book published with Baker Book House in Grand Rapids, Mich., (*Heartsongs*), a scissor-craft how-to-do-it book with Sterling Publishers of New York City and a book entitled *Liberation 1944-1945* with G.R. Welch Publishing in Canada.

Her short stories have been published in periodicals and anthologies in the Netherlands, Canada, the U.S., South Africa and Belgium. Grol has written five plays, numerous poems, and has taken part in various radio and television programs.

She has been given the Canadian Authors Award by the Canadian Club of Hamilton, Ont., and the Bourgoyne Award from the YWCA of St. Catharines for poetry, short stories and illustrations.

Her "Toronto" poem has been incorporated into an educational CD ROM.

A 1986 article in the *Guardian Express* gives a few examples of her achievements:

"Her book *Lelawala, Maid of the Mist* was made into a play and performed in schools in Bhutan, India. Her *Canadian Tales* (written in English) is on the reading list in the Free Schools in The Hague. She receives orders for her books from Australia, and requests from Japan for the right to translate her work into Japanese.

Not bad for a nurse who used to be in charge of helping kids get rid of lice in war-torn Amsterdam.

## Of growing and being old...

The pace becomes slower  
the head bends lower  
The hands are less sure  
and voices grow often demure.  
That is growing old.

The dreams of the old  
for their future, less bold.  
the demands for life less wild  
their answers grow quieter and mild,  
That is growing old.

To have grown old is  
to feel less tall and even small,  
For having no rights at all,  
and having to do as being told  
that truly is the worst of being old.  
1990 Revised 1993-1995

This poem tells how I feel about growing old. Holland Chr. Homes is truly the very best place you can think of for anyone growing old, and expecting or fearing some form of helplessness in the future. So far I am grateful to be able to go on with my writing and enjoying my life. But so many around me can't. My heart is heavy when I see people slowly dwindling away, when their memory goes and with it their past, present and their personality.

# The rainbow on the ground

Lini Richarda Grol

After a few rainy days it was a lovely sunny day in the spring. The country road was laced with puddles cheerfully reflecting the sunlight and the profusely blossoming trees.

I followed and watched Bertha, my neighbor, a young single mother who went down the road with head bent, leading her four-year-old Annie by the hand. She was obviously absorbed in her problems, which I knew were too many and too heavy for one so young.

I hurried to join her, but then drew back when I saw how Annie tried to draw her mother's attention with her excited chatter. I realized that Annie needed her mother and I should not intrude on this rare moment of their togetherness.

Unaware of her mother's sad mood, Annie chatted non-stop, and with a squeal of joy jumped over every puddle on her way. She rambled on and on about all she saw and sensed. Life was a great adventure for her, and she was jubilant in her eagerness to

rainbow of colors. Startled, she shook off her troubling thoughts and looked at Annie, then at this small symbol of hope.

Annie beamed up at her: "Isn't it pretty, Mommy?" Bertha smiled and nodded at Annie, suddenly becoming aware of the little girl's joy-filled face, astonished at the simple beauty of a rainbow in a mud puddle.

A rainbow. A symbol of hope. But before she could respond and explain the beautiful meaning of this symbol, Annie had discovered other wonders. For the moment Bertha forgot her problems and truly listened to Annie's joyful chatter. Bertha saw the world through the eyes of her happy girl, and Annie's joy became hers.

Annie's chubby little hand kept pointing here and there and she would cry with a delighted chuckle or a secret whisper, "Oh, Mom, look there..."

She saw a robin nearby, furiously picking in the grass; Then a chickadee clowning and calling from a low-hanging branch in a sapling. "There...., there," and "Oh...."

A black squirrel had darted across the road in front of them. Annie, beaming with delight and now aware of her mother's full attention, kept shouting and pointing at blooms and blossoms. Suddenly she stopped to point in absolute silence at a monarch butterfly. It flitted in front of them before landing on a dandelion.

Up and down went Annie's little hand. Sniffing, she exclaimed with a contented sigh looking up at her mother, Oh, smell.... Her hand still pointed while she enjoyed the sweet scent of pink hyacinths and then a deep mauve lilac....

Her mother, now sharing Annie's delight, followed the small hand that showed God's wonderful world. Bertha's dark day unexpectedly turned out to be a memorable little feast with her young daughter. Who but a small child can turn a dirty puddle and an oil spill into a shimmering rainbow, the very symbol of hope?

Guided by a little child, Bertha truly saw God's work, and once again had hope and faith for their future. That night she gratefully counted her blessings.



## The special Olympics

Wingless they swim and struggle  
against the strong current.  
Fearless they climb a mountain  
expecting to reach the horizon  
which is always receding.

Their mothers watch and hold their breath...  
They cringe when they see how their children pay for life's bitter mishap.

But their children ignore their lack, and unaware of what others call their handicap, cheerfully race and romp.

They shout and chant and unaware of the odds they do what they want, and laugh out loud when they reach their OLYMPUS....

share her discoveries with her mom. Bertha hardly took notice of her girl's cheerful chatter. I could see that this certainly was not her day.

Suddenly Annie squealed, and pulling her mother back, pointed. "Oh, look, Mom, down there — a real rainbow. Look!"

Reluctant at first, Bertha had to stop to look at a spill of tractor oil in a mere mud puddle. But it created, with the reflection of the sun, a shimmering

## Down's Syndrome

She bumbles through life, cheering her extended family, by showering them with graceful gifts, of love and laughter.

Like a colorful butterfly she flutters through life, touching tired hearts and filling empty hands leaving many people speechlessly wondering... why...?



## Feature



# A question of security



Nannette Worrell Serra

"Lucifer was the Angel of Light. He lived in a perfect environment. Yet he chose to reject God. How do I know, after I've gone to heaven, that I won't also reject God?"

I leaned forward in my back row pew to make sure I heard what answer the visiting evangelist would give to the young man who had anxiously asked the question. I had come for three consecutive services to

**"Totally unaware of what he was doing, the visiting evangelist offered assurance of eternal security with the one hand but took it away with the other."**

hear this evangelist teach from the Book of Revelation. On all three nights, before he would begin his teaching, the evangelist had spent from 10 to 15 minutes attempting to assure his Christian audience that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

He'd told us on one occasion that our lives would not be worth 10 cents until we knew the security of our salvation and could go on to mature in Christ. He said many people were frightened by thoughts of Christ's second coming because they were not sure they would be taken to meet the Lord in the air. Because of this fear, he said, few would even read Revelation. So it was, for three nights, he tried to push home a sense of our eternal security.

Each night I had become more frustrated. Totally unaware of what he was doing, the visiting evangelist offered assurance of eternal security with the one hand but took it away with the other. On the one hand he said, "You can know that you are eternally secure and your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life." On the other hand he said, "Of your own free will, you can reject your salvation tomorrow and be eternally lost."

In fact, on this third night of his teaching, he appeared to mock those who believe in what he termed "unconditional eternal security."

"Those who believe in unconditional eternal security," he loudly proclaimed, "must not



COURTESY MUSEU D'ART DE CATALUNYA, BARCELONA

*An angel and a demon dispute over the soul of a dead man, which is being weighed in a balance. The angel cautions the demon not to cheat (a 13th-century fresco).*

know God because God is a free moral agent. We are created in the image of God so, therefore, we are free moral agents as well."

Since I am not one of those people who sat down one day and decided, of my own free will, to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior, I took offense at being mocked. My salvation experience was more like that of C.S. Lewis who said he had been dragged, kicking and screaming, into the Kingdom of God.

The evangelist's logic — "I am created in the image of God, therefore my will is as free as God's will" — made me want to disrupt the meeting by shouting, "God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and his will is sovereign. Though I am created in his image, I am none of those things."

It reminded me of something I

read many years ago in a Spiritual Counterfeits Project magazine. It was the idea that humankind was created in the image of God and promptly bowed down to worship the

**"Not only was I dragged kicking and screaming into the Kingdom of God, but I have, on about three occasions, attempted to get out."**

image. Isn't that what we do when we endow ourselves with godlike powers and yield to Satan's suggestion that we are "like God?"

(Someone who read this article as I was writing it pointed out to me that Satan did not reject God. On the contrary, Satan wanted to be "like God.")

Consequently, God rejected him.)

When the anxious young Christian voiced his fear that he might reject God, sorrow came over my heart. I felt sorrow for the evangelist who could not convey a sense of eternal security because of his view that the individual has control of his or her own destiny through his or her free will. I felt sorrow for the young man who had no security because he placed his eternal destiny in his own hands and not God's.

How did the evangelist answer the question? The evangelist replied, "The Bible does not say that anyone rejects Christ once they get to heaven. God foresees all things and he foresaw that no one rejected him in heaven so he recorded it in Scripture." (I have not found any such thing recorded in Scripture.)

The young man appeared satisfied with that answer. I wonder if he woke up the following morning and asked himself the real question: "What assurance do I have that I won't reject Christ today?"

If I held to the "free moral agent" belief, this would be my main concern. Not only was I dragged kicking and screaming into the Kingdom of God, but I have, on about three occasions, attempted to get out. I'm sure I am not the only Christian who has said to the Lord, "Please go away and leave me alone."

Thankfully, he has never taken orders from me. I can vouch for the fact that, so far as my experience and Nebuchadnezzar's, God does do as he wills in heaven and on earth, and no one can say to him, "Why are you doing this?"

There are Jonahs in the world who get in boats and make desperate attempts to flee from the presence of God. The psalmist asked, "Where can I flee from your Spirit?"

As a young Christian I was

both amused and shocked when my pastor told the congregation, "If a person can lose his salvation, I vote we shoot him as soon as he receives Christ."

After my Jewish cousin received Christ, her father waited for this "phase" to pass.



*Detail of a 12th-century painting of Satan tempting Christ (Church of St. Martin, Zillis, Switzerland).*

After several years he told her, "I guess when Jesus jumps on your back he never gets off."

Exactly! God is not subject to my will. I am controlled by his will. As a teenager I was always quoting *Invictus*. I really believed that I was the master of my own fate and the captain of my own soul. Then I had the experience that Kierkegaard described when he said, "At one time or another in every man's life, he comes to realize there is a will at work that is greater than his own."

Certainly that evangelist gave mixed messages. There's really no point in singing "our God reigns" after preaching "your will can veto God's will."

*Nannette Worrell Serra is a full-time free-lance writer who lives in St. Louis, Missouri. She has a BA in communications and an associate's degree in journalism. She calls herself a "Reformed Baptist charismatic."*



## Feature

# Dreams about a garbage-toting pastor

Johannes DeViet

If it is true that our thinking is shaped by things which happen to us, recalling some of the earliest events of my life helps me understand why I am what I am, and why I set my priorities the way I do.

My first memory involves my mother's youngest brother. I later learned that he drove a

**As I grew older I understood that this young uncle caused his family a lot of worry: he seldom, if ever, attended church, and he had married a "worldly" woman.**

truck for a firm which mixed lubricants specifically for the diesel engines of the great variety of ships that plied the waters of the Netherlands' many rivers. Whenever one of his runs brought him to our part of the city at coffee time, he would stop at our place for a cup of his sister's brew.

I remember him as a tall and strong adult whose booming voice would ask, "Hey, Sis, is the coffee brown?" I could have been no older than three then, and he would lift me so high that my head almost touched the ceiling. His coveralls smelled a little like the oil his truck carried, and his pocket usually held a chocolate bar which was to be shared with my younger sister. The one younger yet was too little for that sort of treat, and my older siblings, all six of them, were off at school.

As I grew older I understood that this young uncle caused his family a lot of worry: he seldom, if ever, attended church, and he had married a "worldly" woman. I got to know her a little, too. She had bobbed hair, wore lipstick and even had a "worldly" name. They had a son who was the same age as our baby.

## Grieving without hope?

At this point, I should explain that we belonged to the most conservative Reformed denom-

ination in existence. I won't tax your patience by trying to explain the points of doctrine which set us apart from all other churches.

For the purpose of this story it will be sufficient to say that right doctrine was at least as important as faith itself, and that good works consisted mainly of bad things you did *not* do.

After more than 60 years, I cannot be sure of exact years or dates, but I was not yet old enough to go to school when Uncle Jacob fell ill. He suffered, I believe, from an enlarged heart, and I heard that the sports in which he had been involved were to blame. Expressions like "strong as a bear" would indicate that he might have participated in something as "worldly" as weightlifting.

After a short illness Uncle Jacob died. I still remember Mom's sobs and tear-filled eyes. Mom, always ready to share what she believed, could not easily share grief. I later wondered, did she perhaps grieve like those who have no hope? (1 Thess. 4:13).

## The garbage pastor

More than 10 years later, I heard the rest of the story from one of my many cousins. She was the only daughter of Mom's oldest brother. Her mother had died when she was only 12, her father had moved in with his father and his two single daughters and, although she really lived with her father, she



Johannes DeViet '91

spent so much time at our place that we regarded her more as a sister than as just another cousin.

Ann was in her late teens when Uncle Jacob fell ill, and she belonged to the youth group of a church more "liberal" than ours. That church's congregation was very large; it had half a dozen buildings spread through the east end of our city, and each member of its pastoral team had his own area to look after.

When cousin Ann heard that our pastor had been asked more than once to visit our ailing uncle but had never taken time to do so (we found excuses for him: he was too busy with his large congregation and his political position, and, after all, Uncle Jacob no longer attended

his church), she told a minister she had met at her youth group of her uncle's illness, and he attended the dying man during his final days on earth. I did not ask if he also officiated at his funeral. If he did, it might explain why Mom's grief, or the part of it which we could see, did not last very long.

Cousin Ann may have told me a lot more about that pastor. All I remember is that, according to her, he did not look at all like any minister she had known before; and that he, on garbage day, went through the neighborhood assigned to him. He would climb the two or even three flights of stairs of the tenements which housed some of his senior parishioners, and carry the garbage pails to the curb for those who were too feeble to do it themselves and who had no friends or relatives living nearby.

## A large-heart welcome

At my age a person cannot always sleep when it is the proper time to do so. Sometimes, like now, I get up to write; at other times I just lie there "daydreaming" the night away. In my daydream that garbage-toting pastor tells my uncle the story of Zacchaeus, the sinner who, like Uncle Jacob, was after all, a son of Abraham, and to whom salvation came. (Luke 19).

Then I see that same pastor at heaven's gate where, no, he is not asked to recite the five points of Calvinism, or chided for taking so much time carrying

garbage and visiting the sick and dying that sometimes the quality of his sermons suffered. What he hears from the King is: "Come, you who are blessed of my Father, take your inheritance.... I was sick and you looked after me." *I was old and feeble and you carried out my garbage.* (see Matthew 25).

Behind that King I see those seniors, no longer feeble, smiling

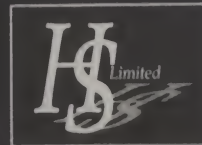
**"Come, you who are blessed of my Father, take your inheritance....**

**I was sick and you looked after me." I was old and feeble and you carried out my garbage.**

ing their welcome, and in my best moment I faintly see the face of Uncle Jacob who died of an enlarged heart and who is there because the heart of the King was enlarged so much that he has room for sinners like Zacchaeus; and Jacob; and Johannes.

How sad that in the church of my youth we could not imagine how unimaginable God's love really is. But it is even sadder that, after all these years, I'm still struggling with my priorities.

Johannes DeViet is a member of First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont.



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## Advice

## Peter and Marja

are  
**IN****Dealing with  
accusations  
and fragile  
egos****Dear P & M:**

*I was hurt terribly by a letter written by my best friend's son. In it he accused me of overhearing me say something sarcastic about him and his work*

*during a visit with his mother. He went on to say that he felt like kicking me out of the house at the time, and that I was to break off my friendship with his parents. He said that he deserved my dignity and respect and that I was hardly in a position to judge him, since he supported himself, unlike one of my daughters who relied on welfare for a year after her divorce. He warned me away from saying anything else about him to his parents in the future.*

*As you can imagine, my pain at receiving such a letter is deep. For the life of me I have no idea what I said that upset him so. If only he would have interrupted our conversation at the time and pointed out what it was that I had said. As adults we could have fixed things right then and there.*

*I don't know what to do now. I can't tell my friend about her son's letter and accusations. She'd be so hurt. Yet I can't imagine avoiding my best friend just because this young man has moved back home and feels this way about me. If I would stay away from my best friend she would wonder what was wrong.*

**Dear Unintentional Comment:**

In all likelihood you did make an innocent comment that unintentionally hurt this young man. It is obvious to us that he is feeling very defensive about his situation in life. On a deep level he is probably embarrassed about moving back home with his parents at his age; perhaps he is also somewhat chagrined at his present work situation. Whatever the case, he is super-sensitive right now and you said something that stabbed his fragile ego at a bad time in his life.

**What to do?** First of all, you cannot break off your friendship. We must never yield to someone's threats. Carry on as before. Go to your friend's home as usual. Make it clear by your normal social patterns that this letter has no power over you.

Secondly, write him back. Tell him that you're willing to admit that you may have said something that accidentally hurt him, but that you don't know what it was. Tell him that you are more than willing to apologize if and when he tells you what you said. Reassure him that you have never doubted his dignity and respect in all the years that you've known him, including now. Reassure him that you will respect his privacy and avoid discussing him in any manner with his parents. You'll feel better once you've mailed your card or letter.

In such a painful situation, it is tempting to become defensive yourself, especially when you are faced with an unwarranted attack. In the face of this over-reaction you must act like a mature adult. Don't go down to his level. Try to understand the root of his insecurity and defuse the situation as much as you can.

We pray that the Lord will soften his heart and bless your peacemaking efforts in this difficult situation. Let us know how this was resolved and whether or not he was receptive to you.

**Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.**

*Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.*

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**For our  
Calendar of  
Events,  
please turn  
to page 19**

**Tombstones talk:  
witness to the ages****Nicholas Vogelzang**

Last words are often important words. Why not place a text other than name and date on your tombstone? Prepare now!

The Lord tells us to remember his name (Psalm 20:7). A witness to his name inscribed on a gravestone will last long. *National Geographic* tells of the still plainly visible Roman inscriptions in Bath, England, carved before the time of Christ. These may last until Jesus returns.

† I am alive forever (Rev. 1:18).

† In my Father's house (John 14:2).

† I give eternal life, they shall never perish (John 10:28).

† God is merciful. (Psalm 116:5).

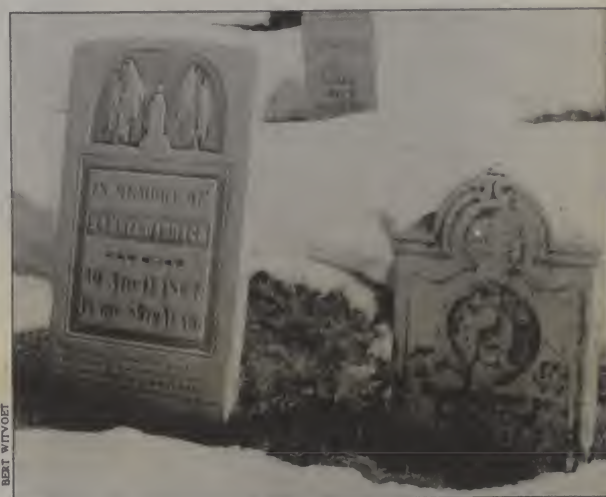
† His mercies fail not (Psalm 118:1).

† I know that my Redeemer lives (Job 19:25).

† I shall see God (Job 19:26).

If you're more scholarly inclined:

† Expectamus te domine (We are



*A 133-year-old message on the headstone of one Samuel Darrach: The winter of trouble is past./ The storms of affliction are o'er./ His struggles are ended at last./ And terror and death are no more.*

The words you choose may convert your children's children. What if all Christians did this? We would continue to be witnesses to the world long after our deaths. All of us want to say something lasting to those we leave. We read, "He being dead yet speaks." Think how many passersby will see the witness on your tombstone in years to come.

I like to visit cemeteries, for they give life's true perspective. I think in the past 10 years I've seen 10,000 "Beloved mother" inscriptions. A fine sentiment placed by these women's children. But what about witnessing to a Christian mother's love of God?

**To the point**

There's no room to be wordy on a tombstone but there are countless possibilities. Here are some examples:

† The Lord is my Shepherd.

† Rejoicing in heaven.

† Glorifying God forever (Psalm 86:12).

expecting you, O Lord).

† Nil nisi te domine (Nothing but you, Lord).

Song titles or phrases may be apt:

† Other refuge have I none.

† On Christ the solid rock I stand.

† Amazing grace.

† Jesus loves me.

For those more doctrinally inclined:

† I believe in God (Psalm 116:10).

† Saved by grace.

† Converted to his will by his love.

† Preserved by his love.

Titles of books may also be used:

† Surprised by joy.

† My utmost for his highest.

† No more fears.

† To be near to God.

† Knowing God.

† In the New Jerusalem.

† Victory at last.

*Rev. Nicholas Vogelzang is a retired Christian Reformed pastor who lives in Aurora, Colorado.*



## Business

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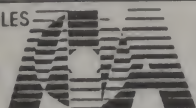
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Classifieds

Classified Rates	Birthdays	Anniversaries	Obituaries	Teachers
<p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births \$25.00</p> <p>Marriages &amp; Engagements \$40.00</p> <p>Anniversaries \$45.00</p> <p>2-column anniversaries \$90.00</p> <p>Obituaries \$45.00</p> <p>Notes of thanks \$35.00</p> <p>Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p><b>ATTENTION!</b></p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p><b>NEWLYWEDS &amp; NEW PARENTS</b></p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p><b>Christian Courier</b> 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p><b>HERREWYNEN (nee STIGTER):</b> Naaldwijk, the Neth. Townsend, Ont. 1917 1997 On Feb. 20, 1997, we will celebrate the 80th birthday of our loving Mother and Oma</p> <p><b>NELLIE HERREWYNEN (nee STIGTER)</b> Our prayer is that God will continue to bless her with health and happiness in the years to come. With love from your children: Martin &amp; Christine Herrewynen — Burlington Paul &amp; Jane Herrewynen — Simcoe Marianna &amp; Peter Hogeterp — London Jack &amp; Gert Herrewynen — Burlington Betty &amp; Willem Stolk — De Lier, the Neth. Leonard &amp; Sandy Herrewynen — Simcoe and 21 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. An open house will be held on Saturday, Feb. 22, 1997, at Southview Manor in Townsend, Ont., from 2-4 p.m. Address: 76 Townsend Centre Dr., Apt. 103, Townsend, ON N0A 1S0</p>	<p></p> <p><i>To God be the glory.</i></p> <p>1947 February 28 1997 With joy and thankfulness to our Lord we hope to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>HENDRIK and TRIJNTJE METSELAAR (nee HIEMSTRA)</b> Clare &amp; Sandra — Whitby, Ont. Juliana Hilly &amp; Timothy — Courtice, Ont. Mary &amp; Terry — Baldonnel, B.C. Andrew, Erik, Michael Nancy &amp; Gary — Whitby, Ont. Matthew, Kaitlin Tom — Courtice, Ont. Jack — Hampton, Ont. Cheryl, Christine Friends and relatives are invited to celebrate with us at an open house, to be held at Durham Chr. Homes, 10th floor, D.V., on March 1, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., Whitby, Ont. Address: Durham Chr. Homes, 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., #808, Whitby, ON L1N 8R4</p>	<p>Rijssen, the Neth. Acton, Ont. Jan. 20, 1923 - Jan. 25, 1997 The Lord in his wisdom took home to be with him, our dear father and opa</p> <p><b>ALBERT LEFERINK</b> Predeceased by his wife Andrena Jagersma. Predeceased by his second wife Sita Borg. Sadly missed by his sister Mien Gniffioen in the Netherlands. Lovingly remembered by his children: Renee &amp; Ryan Huisenga — Collingwood, Ont. John &amp; Diane Leferink — Acton, Ont. Hank &amp; Rita Leferink — Acton, Ont. Albert Jr. &amp; Janet Lefennk — Georgetown, Ont. Ada &amp; Harry Dykxhoom — Collingwood, Ont. Wayne &amp; Rachel Leferink — Nottawa, Ont. Tim &amp; Karen Leferink — Nottawa, Ont. Gerda &amp; Peter Dorsman — Georgetown, Ont. Marion &amp; Troy Smidstra — Mississauga, Ont. Dorothy &amp; John Ufkes — Kerkfield, Ont. Rick &amp; Diana Borg — Rockwood, Ont. Cindy &amp; Chris Buikema — Brampton, Ont. Karen &amp; Tim Leferink — Nottawa, Ont. Kim &amp; Wade Williams — Acton, Ont. and 46 grandchildren. A memorial service was held in Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Acton, Ont., on Jan. 27, 1997, by Pastor Shawn Brix. Correspondence address: Ada Dykxhoom, 467 Maple St., Collingwood, ON L9Y 2S2</p>	<p><b>BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School</b> invites applications for 1997/98. Anticipating continued growth the following potential openings are being considered: 1) <b>Full-time Grade 1</b> (experience preferred) 2) <b>Full-time Grade 2</b> (French would be an asset) 3) <b>Full-time Grade 4</b> with specialties in French and instrumental music. Please send resumes by March 1, 1997, to: <b>Mrs. Jane Tjeerdama, Principal</b> Timothy Chr. School 49 Ferris Lane Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1</p>
	<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p> <p>Zaandam Peterborough the Neth. Ont. 1957 February 14 1997 With grateful hearts we celebrate 40 years of marriage of our parents <b>KEITH and GRACE BRINKMAN (nee SCHAAP)</b> Praise God for his sustaining grace and mercy. May he continue to richly bless the two of you. With our love: Grace &amp; Gary Brouwer — Escondido, Calif. Miranda, Liesje, Annette, John Dirk &amp; Margie Brinkman — Tottenham, Ont. Danielle, Annelise, Bethany John &amp; Annette Brinkman — Ottawa, Ont. Hannah, Benjamin Kathleen Brinkman — Toronto, Ont. Address: 399 Walton St., Peterborough, ON K9H 4S9</p>	<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>February 4, 1997 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Rom. 8:28a). At the Lord's appointed time our brother, brother-in-law and uncle <b>JAN DOLFING</b> went to be with his Lord and Savior. Predeceased by his wife Heintje Dolfin (nee Wolters), Sept. 1993. He will be sadly missed by all of us. Gnetje Sliemers (nee Dolfin) — Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont. Jantje Dolfin — Hoogeveen, the Neth. Klaas &amp; Willemina Hessels (nee Dolfin) — St. Catharines, Ont. nieces and nephews. We pray the Lord may comfort his children and grandchildren in this time of sorrow. Correspondence address: John and Alma Dolfin, P.O. Box 105, Mangonui, Northland, New Zealand.</p>	<p>Matthew 6:33 On Saturday, Feb. 1, 1997, the Lord welcomed into His glory His faithful servant <b>EVERT WESTERNENG</b> Beloved husband of Johanna Westerneng-Van Rossum. Much loved father of: Fena &amp; John Van Loenen — Tottenham, Ont. Paul &amp; Bernice (Leanna), Troy, Megan Doreen &amp; John Horlings — Alliston, Ont. Janessa &amp; Michael, Kristen, Renee, Jeremy, Danielle, Andrew Henk &amp; Twila Westerneng — Edson, Alta. Johanna, Kyle, Dreana, Everett Edward &amp; Patricia Westerneng — Barrie, Ont. Rudy, Gregory, Jenna He was an inspiration to us all. Correspondence address: Mrs. Johanna Westerneng, 75 Ellen St., #310, Barrie, ON L4N 7R6</p>	<p><b>BOWMANVILLE, Ont.:</b> Due to increased enrolment, <b>Knox Chr. School</b> invites applications for two <b>primary teaching positions</b> for the 1997-98 school year. Due to an anticipated maternity leave, we also require a senior kindergarten teacher for the 97-98 school year only. If you would like to become part of a dynamic, growing school of over 300 students in a modern, well-equipped facility within a park-like semi-rural setting, forward your letter of application and resume to the principal: <b>Bill Helmus</b> Knox Chr. School 410 Scugog Street Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2 Phone: (905) 623-5871 Fax: (905) 623-8877</p>
	<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>APARTMENTS: Redeemer College</b> has 2- and 4-bedroom, furnished apartments available. Can be rented daily, weekly or monthly at reasonable rates. No lease required. Please call (905) 648-2131, ext. 260 or 290.</p>	<p><b>For Sale</b></p> <p><b>For sale: Johannus Sweetinck 10 Digital Classical Organ</b> for home or medium church. Has latest digital technology for realistic "Pipe Organ" sound. A must to hear! Floor model, one only from \$19,995.00 for \$14,500.00. Full warranty. Please call (519) 688-3540.</p>	<p><b>BURNS LAKE, B.C.: Burns Lake Chr. School</b> requires a <b>teacher/principal</b> to commence Sept. 1997. Please send your resume with your statement of faith and philosophy of Chr. education to: <b>Robert Duiker, Principal</b> Burns Lake Chr. School P.O. Box 574, Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0</p>	<p><b>GEORGETOWN, Ont.:</b> <b>Georgetown District Chr. School</b> has a <b>definite opening in Kindergarten</b>. Because of a large expected enrolment this position could be 100% for two classes. We also have <b>definite positions available in the junior and intermediate grades</b> due to growth. Strengths in art and computers would be an asset. If you are interested in joining our dynamic, expanding, school community please send resumes to: <b>Mrs. Treena Sybersma, Principal</b> Georgetown District Chr. School 11643 Trafalgar Rd., R.R. 1 Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4</p>
<p><b>Attention:</b></p> <p>If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• send printed or typed copy</li> <li>• include billing address</li> <li>• include contact person with phone number.</li> </ul> <p><b>Thank you.</b></p>	<p>Look for our <b>Calendar of Events</b> on page 19...</p>			<p>Send your questions to <b>Peter and Marja</b>. Confidentiality is assured.</p>



## Classifieds

Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities		
<p><b>PONOKA, Alta.: Ponoka Chr. School</b>, located in Central Alberta has <b>possible teaching openings in elementary and junior high</b>. Alberta Certification required. Application forms available.</p> <p><b>E.C. Land, Principal</b> Ponoka Chr. School 6300 - 50 St. Ponoka, AB T4J 1E6 Phone: (403) 783-6563 Fax: (403) 783-6687</p>	<p><b>Langley Christian Schools</b></p> <p>Enrolment increases and the addition of Grade 11 means positions will be available for the 1997-98 school year. Applicants need to send a resume, statement of educational philosophy, and teaching evaluation reports. Eligibility for a BC Teaching Certificate is required.</p> <p><b>Elementary Campus (K-5)</b> * Primary &amp; Intermediate Openings * Music (80%) and French (20%) Teacher (Qualifications in Phys Ed and/or Special Ed would be added asset at Intermediate level.)</p> <p><b>Middle School (6-8)</b> Possible Opening for Teacher at Grade 7/8 (Qualifications in French an asset.)</p> <p><b>High School Campus</b> (3 or 4 Teaching Positions) * Computer Science Teacher * French * Career and Personal Planning (Applicants also need to be able to teach one or two of the following: Bible, Drama, Math, Business, English, Socials or Science.)</p> <p>Send applications to the Principals:</p> <table><tr><td><b>Leo Smit</b> (Elementary) 21789-50th Avenue Langley, BC V3A 3T2 Phone: (604) 533-2222 Fax: (604) 533-7276</td><td>or</td><td><b>Peter Van Huizen</b> (Middle/High) 22702-48 Avenue Langley, BC V2Z 2T6 Phone: (604) 533-0842 Fax: (604) 533-0842</td></tr></table>	<b>Leo Smit</b> (Elementary) 21789-50th Avenue Langley, BC V3A 3T2 Phone: (604) 533-2222 Fax: (604) 533-7276	or	<b>Peter Van Huizen</b> (Middle/High) 22702-48 Avenue Langley, BC V2Z 2T6 Phone: (604) 533-0842 Fax: (604) 533-0842	<p><b>SEEKING A PASTOR</b></p> <p><b>Horizon Community Church</b>, a new CRC ministry of 100 families, is seeking a pastor. The church is located in the thriving suburban community of Highlands Ranch, a part of the <b>Denver Metropolitan area</b>. Key to the church's program is Bible-based dynamic preaching, enthusiastic worship, and sharing of the gospel in active outreach to a suburban community. Essential to the church's development is continued facilitation of the merging of two congregations and leadership for staff ministry. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to the <b>Search Committee, Horizon Community Church, 7140 S. Colorado Blvd., Littleton, CO 80122.</b></p>	<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p>
<b>Leo Smit</b> (Elementary) 21789-50th Avenue Langley, BC V3A 3T2 Phone: (604) 533-2222 Fax: (604) 533-7276	or	<b>Peter Van Huizen</b> (Middle/High) 22702-48 Avenue Langley, BC V2Z 2T6 Phone: (604) 533-0842 Fax: (604) 533-0842				
<p><b>OKANAGAN NORTH, B.C.: The Vernon Chr. School</b>, a parent operated school, is a diverse Christian community providing education to 234 students in Kindergarten to Grade 8. In anticipation of future growth and the addition of Grade 9/10, the school is seeking the services of an <b>Assistant Principal</b> (50% teaching, 50% administration). Applications are also being accepted for possible openings in the intermediate (4-9) and primary (K-3) grades. Send resumes to:</p> <p><b>Mr. Elco Vandergrift, Principal</b> 6890 Pleasant Valley Road Vernon, BC V1B 3R5</p>	<p><b>Personal</b></p>	<p><b>HOUSTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL</b></p> <p>Houston Christian School invites applications from elementary and secondary teachers for <b>potential openings in both the elementary and secondary grades</b>. The specific elementary grade or combination grade is not yet decided. Applications from secondary teachers with skills in math, computer studies or French will be very attractive — secondary teachers need to teach several subjects. We expect about 100 students in the elementary grades (K-6) and 70 students in our secondary grades (7-12) for the 1997-98 school year. A building addition and full gym came into use in November 1995. Houston is a forestry-based community of some 4,500 people. Applications will be welcomed by <b>Jack VandenBorn, Principal</b>, at:</p> <p><b>Houston Christian School, P.O. Box 237, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0, Phone: (250) 845-7736; Fax: (250) 845-7738; e-mail: hcs@netshop.net</b></p>	<p><b>Renew your CC subscription now!</b></p>			
<p>Our friend, a vivacious, outgoing <b>professional female</b> with Christian world and life views, <b>would like to meet a Christian male</b>, 38-45, for friendship and possibly for a lasting relationship. All replies will be acknowledged. Please send letters to <b>File #2660, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.</b></p>	<p><b>Widow (Dutch-Canadian) would like to meet a gentleman</b> in his late 50s to early 60s, for companionship and good times. My children are grown and I love to travel. Please send letters to <b>File #2661, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</b></p>	<p><b>ONE TO ANOTHER</b></p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: <b>#302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2</b></p>	<p><b>We love early birds!</b></p> 	<p>Our Circulation Manager is at her job every day trying to keep our subscriptions up to date. We spend thousands of dollars each year in postage sending out renewal notices, reminders, etc. To top it off, Canada Post charges us an extra fee for using the handy business-reply envelopes we make available. <b>This means that in order to get a subscription renewed we have to pay close to \$1.00 in postage alone!</b></p> <p>The computer label on your <i>Christian Courier</i> copy shows the month in which your subscription is due. If your label shows that your subscription is due two or three months from now, <b>kindly consider sending us the renewal fee ahead of time.</b> This way, you will be assured that C.C. will be coming to you regularly, as well as saving us time and postage expenses!</p> <p><b>Be an early bird! We appreciate your co-operation. Please use the coupon below when sending us your renewal fee.</b></p>		
<p>Interested in placing an ad? Get in touch with us for details.</p>	<p><b>Please take advantage of our monthly Business Directory. For the low cost of \$25 you can advertise your business.</b></p> <p>(Please add 7% G.S.T.)</p>	<p><b>COUPON</b></p> <p>Please renew my C.C. subscription for the period indicated:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> one-year renewal. Enclosed is \$43.50 (\$35.00 U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> two-year renewal. Enclosed is \$82.00 (\$66.00 U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> three-year renewal. Enclosed is \$123.00 (\$99.00 U.S.)</p> <p>Name _____ Address _____ City/Town _____ Code _____</p> <p>P.S. If possible, glue your label in this space, or enclose it. Send to: <b>4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</b></p>				



## Classifieds

Church News	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
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*Circulation Manager  
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## Communications Coordinator, CRWRC-Canada

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), is currently seeking applicants for the full-time position of Communications Coordinator with Christian Reformed World Relief Committee - Canada (CRWRC - Canada). The qualified individual must be a creative, energetic, self starter with excellent communications skills, both written and oral, with the demonstrated ability to develop and utilize various media, while possessing an understanding and appreciation of ministries and the work of CRWRC. The responsibilities include the development of all communications/educational resources in the Burlington, Ontario office of CRWRC - Canada.

University degree or college diploma required, preferably in journalism, public relations or communications, with a minimum of two years experience in business, government, or volunteer agency information bureau a plus. Computer proficiency in PageMaker 6.0 or related desktop publishing software is essential.

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For more information or forms, contact Mr. John Rhebergen.



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## WOMEN!

The Canadian Classis Quinte of the Christian Reformed Church was presented with a study paper re biblical texts which appear to express a bias against the female gender and to have contributed to the marginalization of women in our denomination. Classis discussed the paper and sent it back for further study. A response was also written to the report of the synodical committee to study inclusive language for God. Synod needs the balance provided by this response and missing in the committee's report. Persons interested in these issues should write to **Rev. Dirk Habermehl, 16 Pebble Beach Drive, Cobourg, ON K9A 2C5, Canada, enclosing \$1.00 per copy for expenses.**

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## Classifieds/Events

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

## Miscellaneous

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## Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

**Feb. 14** "Lovers Quarrels-Mending the Brokenness of a Divided Church," a special Valentine's Day talk by ICS's Dr. George VandeVelde. At 7:30 p.m., Bethel CRC, (Kerns Rd. & Hwy. 5) **Waterdown**, Ont. Call Janine Lock at (905) 335-0587 for more information.

**Feb. 15** Leader Link presents "A Winter Oasis — streams in the desert," a day of spiritual renewal for Christian Women in Leadership. From 8:45 a.m. to 8 p.m. Info.: Mrs. Krista Hewitt, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, (905) 479-5885, fax (905) 479-4742 (#).

**Feb. 21-22** Marriage Preparation Seminar, First CRC, 287 Water St., **Guelph**, Ont. Info./registration: (519) 822-7720, fax (519) 822-4446.

**Feb. 21-Mar. 1** Students of London District Chr. Secondary School, **London**, Ont., present the play OLIVER. At 8 p.m. on Feb. 21, 22, 28 and Mar. 1. Info.: (519) 455-4360.

**Feb. 22** Tenth Annual Benefit Concert & Silent Auction with Reception featuring The Georgetown Choral Society. Proceeds to Telecare Distress Centre Brampton. At Holland Chr. Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., **Brampton**, Ont. Auction: 6-11 p.m. Concert: 7:30 p.m. Info./tickets: (905) 459-8439.

**Feb. 22** Alberta convention of the Christian Heritage Party, 9:15 a.m., Sandman Inn, **Lethbridge**, Alta. Info.: Nellie Slingerland (403) 345-3205 or Cor Labots (403) 479-5147. E-mail: clabots@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca.

**March 1** The Niagara Symphony Chorus, orchestra and soloists, perform Johannes Brahms' *German Requiem*, 8 p.m., Calvary Church, 89 Scott St., **St. Catharines**, Ont. Info./tickets: (905) 687-4993.

**March 2** The Mississauga Choral Society performs Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne*, 3 p.m., St. Dominic's Church, Cawthra & Atwater, **Mississauga**, Ont. Info./tickets: (905) 278-7059.

**March 2** Cephas CRC, **Peterborough**, Ont., celebrates its 45th anniversary with special services at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Former members are invited to attend. Info.: (705) 743-4904.

**March 7** "Spread the Good News," inspirational evening featuring former Argo and Ti-Cat running back Derrick McAdoo, Rev. David Feddes, The Immigrants, Hans Schouls and the HDCH Praise Team. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. A Back to God Hour presentation: no admission, but an offering for Russian ministry. Info.: (905) 332-5970.

**March 7-8** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents "Een beeld van 'n man," a 3-act comedy, 8 p.m., Market Square Theatre, **Woodstock**, Ont. Tickets: Adrian Rodenburg, (519) 283-6285 (#).

**March 8** Family Back to God Hour Rally, 7:30 p.m., St. Paul's Church, 227 Bloor St. E., **Toronto**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Dave Feddes. Special music by the choirs and brass of the OCMA (director Leendert Kooij) with Andre Knevel at the organ. Come and sing along! (#)

**March 9** Dutch worship service led by Rev. John G. Klomps, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

to **March 13** "Strategic Pastoral Counselling" course will be offered on Thursday afternoons by Dr. David G. Benner, Professor of Psychology at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Recommended for pastors, elders and laypersons involved in counselling ministries. From 3-5 p.m. on Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27, March 6 and 13. Info. 1-800-263-6467 (#).

**March 14-15** Art Talks! *The Ruth Memorial Series on the Arts and Culture*, a new annual series from the ICS, this year featuring international performers Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger. **March 14:** Free organ and piano concert, 8 p.m., Deer Park United Church, 129 St. Clair Ave., **Toronto**, Ont. **March 15:** Dr. Segger presents a free masters level performance lecture on "Webern Piano Variations, Opus 27: Performance and Analysis Relationships," 10 a.m., U. of T., Faculty of Music, 80 Queen's Park Cr., **Toronto**, Ont. Info.: Call ICS at (416) 979-2331.

**March 21-22** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre group presents "Een beeld van 'n man," a 3-act comedy, 8 p.m., Dutch Canadian Club Hall, **London**, Ont. Tickets: Adrian Rodenburg (519) 283-6285 (#).

**April 5** The Eighth Coffee Break/Story Hour Inspirational Rally, 9-4:30 p.m., Park Bible Church, **Burlington**, Ont. Registration starts 8 a.m., Theme: "Fear Not, God Upholds You." Main speaker: Betty Veldman. Info.: Ellen Hessels, (905) 457-7490.

**April 5, 12** The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents "Een beeld van 'n man," a 3-act comedy. **Apr. 5:** 8 p.m., **Peterborough**, Ont. Tickets: Frank Meevis, (705) 799-6919. **Apr. 12:** 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, **Clinton**, Ont. Tickets: Sue Guetter, (519) 482-9257 (#).



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## News

# Extraordinary plan announced to train China's future leaders in Christianity

Dan Wooding

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — An extraordinary plan to help train many of the future leaders of China in evangelism, discipleship and the Christian walk during a week-long conference in San Diego, California, has been announced.

Called "China '97 ... At the Crossroads," this historic gathering will take place June 20-27, 1997. It has been designed especially for mainland Chinese students, scholars, professors and professionals currently in the United States. It is being sponsored by International Students, Inc. (ISI) of Colorado Springs, and by Horizon Christian Fellowship of San Diego, where the conference will take place. Twenty other ministries will also take part.

"I believe partnership is the key to effective ministry today," says Tom Phillips, ISI's president and CEO. "There is more work to do for the Kingdom than one organization can handle." He continues, "This is

a staggering faith venture for ISI, but we believe that God has prepared us 'for such a time as this.'"

Phillips, who was once director of counseling and follow-up for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, explains, "The program for China '97 ... At the Crossroads has been designed with the Chinese students and scholars in mind and will be presented mostly in Mandarin Chinese. I believe it will 'scratch where they itch' spiritually. What these future leaders receive at China '97 ... At the Crossroads will make a lasting impression on their lives and ministries."

## Sensitivity needed

"China is an ancient nation with a rich cultural legacy," says Phillips. "Today it is home to one-fifth of the world's population. But to most Westerners it remains largely a mystery. To those who are native to China, at least one aspect of North American culture is also a

mystery — our faith in Christ."

China '97 ... At the Crossroads will give the students an opportunity to meet, and begin to network in order to facilitate future united ministry in China. The workshop and plenary sessions will be divided into six different subject areas in which the speakers will:

- \* present the evidences for God and Christianity;
- \* explain the basic beliefs of Christianity;
- \* equip both the new and the more mature believers with the habits and the knowledge necessary to grow closer to the Lord;
- \* give conference attendees a chance to discuss the implications of Christianity and to help them think of how Christianity is relevant to China;
- \* address personal and family concerns;
- \* clearly and relevantly teach books of the Bible.

The speakers who will present these issues are distinguished leaders in their fields who have a clear understanding of the im-

portance of these formations. This summer, ISI staff arranged discussion groups of mainland Chinese students, Christian and not, who offered further feedback on how they would design the conference and their reactions to the proposed conference schedule. From their input, he made further modifications to the program.

## Pray and recruit

Tom Phillips says that China '97 ... At the Crossroads will not be simply a program created by Americans for the Chinese, but a program designed specifically with the needs and priorities of Chinese students at the forefront.

He appeals to Christians all over to pray for and help recruit and sponsor students to attend this conference.

Further information can be obtained from: International Students, Inc., P.O. Box C, Colorado Springs, CO 80901. Phone: 1-(800) ISITEAM; fax: (719) 576-5363.

# A picture of true servanthood

Trish Smith

I first took note of Brenda Regnerus when I was given the task of organizing volunteers to assist with the mailings from the Christian Reformed Church office in Burlington, Ont. Her

eagerness to serve at almost anytime amazed me.

I had the unique opportunity of working with Brenda on a Back to God Hour mailing. Brenda worked swiftly and quietly, while the rest of us volunteers chatted with some distraction from our sorting and packing. Once, when I was unsure what to do next, Brenda gave directions, "In the box, get more envelopes. We pile them there."

As the morning progressed, Brenda warmed up to us and shyly joined in the conversation. "I know him. He works at Redeemer," she interjected once. Later she commented, "I work for his brother at the greenhouse in

the summer." It was obvious she enjoyed her work at Dutch Mill Gardens under the patient guidance of a Christian boss and his staff. After eight years, Brenda has been the employee who has worked there the longest.

She told us about the local Christian School bazaar that Saturday and invited us to come. She talked about her extended family and about knitting Christmas presents for them. When the conversation turned to Coffee Break, a women's Bible study group from the CRC and community, Brenda told us she babysat for them at the Ancaster CRC. Brenda was obviously a busy young woman whose life revolved around her family, her church and the Christian school. Bowling and floor hockey were keen competitors for her time.

## A reason to celebrate

Now the day I worked with Brenda was a special day because it was her birthday. She treated us with Timbits. We treated her with a hearty rendition of "Happy Birthday," which made her laugh with excitement. How appropriate it was for us to celebrate Brenda's birth. Though

developmentally challenged, she uses her gifts fully and with such cheerfulness.

Intrigued with her, I arranged to meet Brenda at her home a few days later. I chatted with her mother while we waited for Brenda to return from the Dundas Learning Centre where she was on lunch duty and learning to make menus, to shop, to prepare food and to clean up. What struck me was the complete dedication Brenda's parents, Diane and Andy, had to encourage her to be all that she could be.

When Brenda arrived home, she showed me the slippers, scarves and balls she was making as Christmas presents, and for children in the church nursery. Proudly she displayed her pictures of the rugs she had hooked, two of which are now hanging in the Dundas CRC. She was especially fond of the one picturing Jesus and the children. Brenda shared her experience of publicly professing her faith. She clearly understands that Jesus loves her, and she's certainly happy about it. How fully Brenda is using the gifts God has given her!



Brenda Regnerus poses proudly with one of her hooked rugs: "Jesus and the Children."

## News Digest

### Ireland's first divorce

DUBLIN, Ireland (EP) — The first divorce in Ireland's history was granted Jan 17. A judge announced that he had granted a divorce to an unidentified man who was said to be very sick and unwilling to wait until Ireland's new divorce law officially takes place Feb. 27.

The wife in Ireland's first divorce did not want to end her marriage, but did not contest the application of her husband, who has a child by another woman. The man reportedly wants to marry the other woman before he dies. Ireland's new divorce law will permit divorce if the couple has been separated for four of the previous five years, and if there is "no reasonable prospect of a reconciliation."

### Chile may legalize divorce

SANTIAGO, Chile (EP) — Chilean lawmakers are attempting to pass a bill legalizing divorce. A congressional committee has recommended rejection of the proposal, but supporters of divorce are pushing for a secret vote that would allow legislators to back the divorce bill without being penalized by voters. Supporters say it would end the widespread practice of using fraud to obtain an annulment.

### Flag evokes anything but freedom

CLEMSON, S.C. (EP) — South Carolina's largest black Baptist group has called for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the roof of the Statehouse. For blacks, and many whites, the flag is distasteful and represents the oppression of slavery. Many southern whites see it more sentimentally and are unwilling to give it a less prominent place.

More than 700 ministers representing some 400,000 members of the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina adopted a resolution calling for the flag to be moved "to a more appropriate location." South Carolina Gov. David Beasley has proposed moving the flag to a Confederate monument on the Statehouse grounds.